

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 MCT-01 DHA-02 AID-05 CCO-00 FBOE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 SP-02 OC-06 OPR-02

PA-02 USSS-00 PRS-01 SCA-01 A-01 SCSE-00 OMB-01 SS-15

SY-05 COME-00 TRSE-00 EB-07 SIL-01 LAB-04 NEAE-00

/088 W

-----191359Z 096406 /40

O 191215Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 793

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 1066

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, EG

SUBJECT: CAIRO DISTURBANCES OVER PRICE INCREASES

REF: CAIRO 1044

1. THERE FOLLOWS COMPLETE TEXT OF AHARAM AND GUMHURIYYA PRESS REPORTS OF DISTRUBANCES REPORTED REFTEL. AKHBAR HAS NOT YET PUBLISHED JAN. 19 EDITION.

2. QTE. DEMONSTRATIONS IN CAIRO AND ALEXANDRIA (HEADLINE). CAIR AND ALEXANDRIA WERE THE SCENES OF DOMENSTRATIONS WHICH CONTINUED ALL DAY YESTERDAY UNTIL A LATE HOUR AT NIGHT. DEMONSTRATORS RESORTED TO VIOLENCE, AND CLASHED IN SEVERAL PLACES WITH THE CENTRAL SECURITY FORCES WHICH WERE RUSHED TO THOSE AREAS TO BRING THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL.

3. THE DEOMONSTRATORS SET FIRE TO A NUMBER OF PRIVATE CARS, POLICE CARS, AND FIRE ENGINES. THEY ALSO TRIED TO SET FIRE TO SOME ESTABLISHMENTS, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, HOTELS, HOSPITALS, AND NESSPAPER BUILDINGS. THEY WERE RESISTED BY THE SECURITY FORCES WHICH ENGAGED THEM IN FIERCE BATTLES IN WHICH STICKS AND TEAR UNCLASSIFIED

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GAS BOMBS WERE USED. THE DEMONSTRATORS USED STONES TO SHATTER THE WINDOWS OF PRIVATE CARS.

4. THE CAIRO DEOMONSTRATIONS STARTED IN THE INDUSTRIAL AREA OF HELWAN WHEN THE WORKERS OF THE FIRST SHIFT OF THE RAYON FACTORY AND THE WORKERS OF FACTORY 45 (COMMENT: A MUNITIONS PLANT) WENT ON STRIKE AND STAGED A

DEMONSTRATIO WHICH WAS RESISTED AND STOPPED BY THE CENTRAL SECURITY FORCES AT TORA. MEANS OF TRANSPORT BETWEEN HELWAN AND CAIRO WERE ALSO INTERRUPTED BECAUSE OF THE HUGE PIECES OF STONE WHICH WERE REMOVED FROM SIDEWALKS BY DEMONSTRATORS AND WERE SCATTERED IN STREETS TO HINDER THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC. IN THE AFTERNOON, LARGE NUMBERS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND WORKERS GATHERED IN TAHRIR SQUARE (CAIRO) AND FROM THERE WENT TO THE PEOPLES ASSEMBLY BUILDING WHERE THE CENTRAL SECURITY FORCES TRIED TO DISPERSE THEM, BUT THEY REFUSED. THE SECURITY FORCES WERE FORCED TO USE TEAR GAS BUT THE DEMONSTRATORS AGAIN GATHERED AT TAHRIR SQUARE AND FROM THERE WENT TO SULIMAN STREET WHERE THEY CAUSED DAMAGE TO THE FACADES OF SOME STORES.

5. ANOTHER DEOMONSTRATION WENT TO ATABA SQUARE WHERE THEY ATTEMPTED TO SET FIRE TO THE CENTRAL CAIRO FIRE STATION AND THE NEARBY MUSKI POLICE STATION. AN ATTEMPT WAS ALSO MADE TO SET FIRE TO SAYIDA ZAYNAB AND DARB AL-AHMAR POLICE STATIONS (PARTICULARLY POOR NEIGHBORHOODS). DEMONSTRATORS TRIED TO STORM THE CAIRO SECURITY DEPARTMENT IN BAB AL-KHALEQ DISTRICT (NEXT TO DARB AL-HAMAR), BUT THEY WERE RESISTED BY THE SECURITY FORCES WHICH MANAGED TO DISPERSE THEM.

6. A THIRD ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO SET FIRE TO SHEPHEARDS HOTEL (HOTEL IS ACROSS STREET FROM EMBASSY, BUT WE NOTED NO DISTURBANES THERE) AND CARS PARKED OUTSIDE KASR EL-NIL CASINO. IN GIZA (SOUTHERN WEST BANK OF NILE), A DEMONSTRATION UNCLASSIFIED

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WAS STAGED FROM THE STUDENTS CITY IN IMBABA WHICH MARCHED DOWN AL-SUDAN STREET. WHEN THEY REACHED KITKAT SQUARE, THEY SET FIRE TO SOME KIOSKS AND STORES.

7. MEANWHILE, ANOTHER GROUP OF DEMONSTRATORS CROSSING FROM ZAMALAK AND AL-GALA' BRIDGES WERE RESISTED AND DISPERSED BY SECURITY FORCES. ANOTHER GROUP OF DEMONSTRATORS WENT TO THE SHERATON HOTEL AND SHATTERED GLASS FACADES (WE UNAWARE OF DAMAGE TO SHERITON, ALTHOUGH VICINITY OF HOTEL WAS SCENE OF DISTURBANCES LAST NIGHT; REPORT MAY REFER TO HILTON HOTEL WHICH DID SUFFER DAMAGE) AND CONTINUED THEIR MARCH IN AL-NIL STREET AS FAR AS NAWAL STREET IN AGOUZA, WHERE THEY STONED TROLLEY BUSES AND CARS, SMASHING THE WINDOW PANES OF 12 PRIVATE CARS AND SIX TROLLEY BUSES. THEY SET FIRE TO ADVERTISING POSTERS AND TRAFFIC SIGNS. 48 DEOMONSTRATORS WERE ARRESTED.

8. AT 11 PM A GROUP OF DEMONSTRATORS ATTACKED AL-SHAEL POLICE STATION WITH STONES AND SOME OF THEM TRIED TO SET FIRE TO IT

BUT THE FIRE WAS IMMEDIATELY EXTINGUISHED. A BATTLE THEN FOLLOWED BETWEEN DEMONSTRATORS AND THE SECURITY FORCES WHICH CONTINUED FOR ABOUT ONE AND A HALF HOURS, DURING WHICH FIRE WAS EXCHANGED. COROPORAL MUHAMMAD YUNIS FROM THAT POLICE STATION INVESTIGATION UNIT WAS KILLED WHEN ONE OF THE DEOMONSTRATORS SHOT HIM IN THE HEAD. ADDITIONAL FORCES WERE SENT AND THEY MANAGED TO DISPOSE DEMONSTRATORS.

9. ALEXANDRIA (HEADLINE). DEMONSTRATORS IN ALEXANDRIA SWEEPED THE CITY SINCE MORNING AND CONTINUED TILL A LATE HOUR. ONE HUNDRED THIRTY TWO WERE INJURED BY GUN SHOTS INCLUDING 39 SOLIDERS AND OFFICERS AND THREE WERE KILLED.

10. THE DEOMONSTRATORS SET FIE TO A NUMBER OF DISTRICTS IN THE CITY AND STORMED A NUMBER OF POLICE STATIONS AND SET FIRE TO THEM. ONE OF THE SOLIDERS WAS KILLED AND FIVE WERE UNCLASSIFIED

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INJURED WHEN DEOMONSTRATORS STORMED SHERIF POLICE STATION AND SET FIRE TO IT. THEY ALSO SET FIRE TO ODEON CINEMA, A NUMBER OF KIOSKS, THE BUILDING OF THE ARAB SHIPPING COMPANY, THE ARAB SOCIALIST UNION BUILDING IN MANSHIEH, AND THE VEGETABLE MARKET IN IBRAHIM AL-SHERIF STREET. THEY ALSO SMASHED THE FACADES OF A NUMBER OF STORES IN SAAD ZAGHLUL AND NABI DANIEL STREETS TO LOOT THE GOODS FROM THEM, BUT THE SECURITY FORCES RESISTED THEM WITH TEAR GAS BOMBS. THE SECURITY FORCES WITH THE HELP OF THE PORT GUARDS RESISTED AND DISPERSED DEMONSTRATORS WHO TRIED TO STORM THE PORT.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0794

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11. GOVERNOR OF ALEXANDRIA HUDAYB YESTERDAY HELD A MEETING OF SENIOR SECURITY OFFICERS INCLUDING ASSISTANT TO THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR MAJOR GENERAL HUSNI NAGUIB WHO ARRIVED YESTERDAY IN THE CITY AFTER THE ERUPTION OF DEMONSTRATIONS. THEY REVIEWED THE GRAVE SITUATION IN THE CITY AND THE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH TOOK PLACE. HUGE FORCES FROM THE CENTRAL SECURITY RESERVE FORCES WERE RUSHED TO THE CITY IN AN ATTEMPT TO BRING THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL. HOWEVER, THE HEAVY RAINS WHICH FELL YESTERDAY HELPED TO CALM THE SITUATION.

12. A STATE OF EMERGENCY WAS ANNOUNCED AT THE UNIVERSITY HOOSPITAL AS THE BIGGEST NUMBER OF INJURED PERSONS WERE RUSHED TO IT FOR MAJOR OPERATIONS.

13. IT WAS CLEAR THAT SABOTEUR GROUPINGS WHICH CONTROLLED THE DEMONSTRATIONS WERE LED BY PERSONS WITH WHISTELS WHICH THEY USED IN DIRECTING DEMONSTRATORS. THEY ALSO COMPRISED GROUPS CALLED "THE FIRE GROUPS" WHICH UNDERTOOK THE TAKS OF SETTING FIRES. THESE WERE THE ONES WHICH ATTACKED AKHAR AL-YAWM NEWSPRINT STORES AND SET FIRE TO THEM.

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14. IT WAS ALSO NOTICED THAT SLOGANS WHICH WERE REPEATED BY DEMONSTRATORS WERE THE SAME AND WERE HEARD BEFORE IN PREVIOUS DEMONSTRATIONS IN WHICH LEFTIST ELEMENTS CARRYING NASSER'S PICTURE WERE ACCUSED. THESE ELEMENTS USED THE QUESTION OF PRICES AS A POLITICAL ISSUE IN YESTERDAY'S DEMONSTRATIONS.

15. A DEMONSTRATION WENT YESTERDAY EVENING TO AL-AHRAM NEWSPPAER BUILDING AND SHATTERED A PART OF THE GLASS FACADE. DEMONSTRATORS ATTACKED THE NEARBY AKHBAR AL-YAWM NEWSPPAER BUILDING AND SET FIRE TO A WOODEN KIOSK FACING THE BUILDING AS WELL AS AKHBAR AL-YAWM'S NEWSRING STORES.

16. QUICK INVESTIGATIONS REVEALED THAT THE COMMUNISTS AND MEMBERS OF THE LEFTIST PARTY WERE BEHIND THESE ACTS OF SABOTAGE. IT WAS REVEALED THAT SOME OF THE PERSONS WHO WERE RETURNED IN THE ELECTIONS OF THE BOARD OF HELWAN IRON AND STEEL COMPANY WERE THE ONES WHOLED YESTERDAY'S DEMONSTRATION. THIS COMPANY MARKED A

BEGINNING OF DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH CONTINUED ALL DAY YESTERDAY. THESE MEMBERS WERE DETERMINED THAT WORKERS GO OUT ALTHOUGH SOME OF THE WORKERS WERE AGAINST THIS. (COMMENT: THIS IS APPARENT REFERENCE AT LEAST TO SULIMAN IDRIS, METAL WORKERS' UNION VICE PRESIDENT AND HEAD OF LOCAL UNION COMMITTEE AT HELWAN, WHO KNOWN TO BE MARXIST HARD-LINER WITH PAST HISTORY OF CONFRONTATIONS WITH GOE.)

17. IN SAYIDA ZAYNEB, HAMZA MUSTAFA AL-BADRI, RAPPORTEUR OF THE (LEFTIST) PARTY WAS ARRESTED. AN EMPLOYEE FROM AL-SHARQ COMPANY WAS ARRESTED WHILE HE WAS SETTING FIRE TO SAYIDA ZAYNEB POLICE STATION.

18. IN ZAGAZIG AND MENIA MEETINGS WERE HELD BY THE LEFTISTS DURING WHICH THEY CALLED FOR DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH WERE ACTUALLY STAGED IN BOTH ZAGAZIG AND MENIA IMMEDIATELY AFTER THESE MEETINGS.
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19. THE PARTY'S POLITBURO ALSO ISSUED A STATEMENT ADDRESSED TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE PARTY IN THE GOVERNORATES CALLING UPON THEM TO STAGE MARCHES AND DEMONSTRATIONS IN PROTEST AGAINST RISING PRICES. THESE LEAFLETS SAID THAT THE RECENT DECISIONS SERVED THE CAPITALIST CLASSES.

20. INVESTIGATIONS ALSO PROVED THAT THOSE WHO STAGED THE DEMONSTRATIONS RAISED NASSERITE AND MARXIST SLOGANS.

21. AT THE DOCK YARD IN ALEXANDRIA WHERE DEMONSTRATIONS FIRST FLARED UP, IT WAS PROVEN THAT THE COMMUNISTS WERE THE ONES WHO STARTED BY CALLING UPON WORKERS TO GO TO THE SOCIALIST UNION BUILDING. ON THEIR WAY, THEY WENT TO THE UNIVERSITY, BUT STUDENTS REFUSED TO JOIN THEM. THEY WENT AFTERWARDS TO THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING AND THE COMMUNISTS THERE RESPONDED TO THEM. IT WAS NOTICED THAT DEMONSTRATIONS FOLLOWED A CAREEFUL PLAN. DEMONSTRATIONS SIMULTANEOUSLY ATTACKED THE POLICE STATIONS IN SAYIDA ZAYNEB, AL-WAYLI, AL-GALIYA, AND AL-AZBAKIYA DISTRICTS AND THE FIRE STATIONS IN ATABA.

22. IN ALEXANDRIA THE COMMUNISTS' FIRST TARGET WAS THE POLICE STATIONS. UNQTE.

23. COMMENT: ACCORDING THESE REPORTS, FEW IF ANY F CAIRO'S NUMEROUS POOR NEIGHBORHOODS WERE SPARED DISTURBANCES.
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Message Attributes

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